

**National Marine Aquaculture Legislation**  
*(October 2008)*

- Legislation is needed to authorize the Secretary of Commerce to establish a regulatory system for offshore aquaculture in the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone and to mandate an expanded research program for all of marine aquaculture. Providing regulatory certainty in federal waters and conducting research in support of all types of marine aquaculture (not just offshore) will encourage investments that could contribute to U.S. seafood supply and provide jobs and economic opportunities for coastal communities.
- Currently, domestic marine aquaculture provides only about 1.5% of U.S. seafood consumption. Most seafood (about 80 percent) is imported, and about half of all imported seafood is farmed. The National Offshore Aquaculture Act of 2007, which was introduced in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress as SB1609 and HR2010, would have provided the regulatory certainty needed to encourage investment in offshore aquaculture, mandated the establishment of environmental requirements, and authorized a research program for marine aquaculture (for additional information, see <http://aquaculture.noaa.gov>).
- Although the National Offshore Aquaculture Act is an Administration priority, Congress is not expected to enact the bill in 2008.